



USAID | CAMBODIA

FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE



BACKGROUND

Cambodia's educational system has made enormous strides in the last 3 to 4 years. Net enrollment has increased to about 90 percent in grade one. In 2004, the Royal Government of Cambodia (RGC) increased its recurrent spending on education to 19.5 percent of the national budget, up from 9 percent in 1994. Additionally, there has been massive new construction of classrooms, primarily through donor funding.

Although the trends are positive, much of the progress is donor or NGO driven. Systemic problems remain with continuing high drop out rates, and extremely low teacher salaries. Lower secondary school had a net enrollment of 26 percent and upper secondary school 9.3 percent in 2004/2005.

Approximately half of schools lack clean water and/or sanitation facilities. Educational quality remains low and a majority of children fail to meet basic educational standards for grade promotion. Both students and parents complain about the lack of relevance of education to daily life or employment. Finally, many vulnerable children in Cambodia are unable to take advantage of basic education services.

USAID/CAMBODIA INITIATIVES:

“ Improve the quality of Basic Education ”

In 2003, USAID/Cambodia launched a new basic education initiative designed to improve the quality and relevance of basic education for children in grades 1 to 9. Implemented by the **Research Triangle Institute (RTI)**, this program aims to increase the number of children receiving quality educational programming, strengthen skills of teaching staff and local education authorities, provide a new curriculum including a local life skills component, and increase school/community partnerships.

Other activities in this project include: development of school performance management and school/community/NGO partnerships and decentralization of education management and responsibilities. RTI also provides advisory training and other services to the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport. This program covers all of Cambodia excluding Phnom Penh.

In 2004, USAID added a new Interim Result to address the needs of students from under-served populations. The new Inclusive Education Program emphasizes improvement of access and quality of the teaching-learning process for Cambodia's most educationally disadvantaged populations: girls, very poor, ethnic minorities, disabled, HIV/AIDS infected or affected and remote area children.

In-country implementation of this program is done by **World Education**, who works in partnership with **Kampuchean Action for Primary Education (KAPE)** and **CARE Cambodia** in Kampong Cham, Kratie, and Monduliri. The project focuses on three component areas of teacher education, educational access and quality, and school-community partnerships, designed to increase access opportunities and quality of basic education for children who have difficulty taking advantage of educational services.

BASIC EDUCATION

